

State cuts hit county budget

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by MARIAN
MCMAHON

LAKE COUNTY - Although the county has made efforts to save and keep costs down by self-insuring and other measures over the years, the extended economic downturn has taken its toll.

The recent state budget cuts have made a considerable impact to all municipality budgets as the Local Government Funds have been seriously slashed, and other items have been reduced, or will be eliminated in the future.

Like other political entities, the county has also suffered from loss of income

from real estate taxes, interest and other miscellaneous areas.

"We still haven't determined exactly how much we're going to have to cut, but it's in the neighborhood of a half million dollars for the rest of the year," said Ray Sines, president of the Lake County Board of Commissioners. "We're trying to determine (now) exactly where those cuts are going to be made. We told the sheriff (Dan Dunlap) to expect a pretty big cut, so that's the reason he's gone ahead and started that process (of laying off more employees).

The commissioner said all

departments will be affected, including the commissioners' office, county recorder, auditor and treasurer's offices, building and grounds, the prosecutor and public defender and others.

The department heads have been notified to think about where cuts can be made in their departments.

Sines said they will likely finalize where cuts are to be made during executive session following their regular weekly meeting Thursday, Sept. 1.

"The different departments will be notified of what to expect with a letter following that discussion," Sines said.